Ruth
רות
merged
https://www.sefaria.org/Ruth
This file contains merged sections from the following text versions:
-Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures, published by JPS
-https://jps.org/books/tanakh-the-holy-scriptures-blue/

Ruth

Chapter 1

In the days when the chieftains a I.e., the leaders who arose in the period before the monarchy; others "judges." ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man of Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab.
The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there.
Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons.
They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years.
Then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.
She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that the L ORD had taken note of His people and given them food.
Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah.
But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Turn back, each of you to her mother's house. May the L ORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me!
May the L ORD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!" And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping
and said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."
But Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you?
Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons,
should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of the L ORD has struck out against me."
They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her.
So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law."
But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.
Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. b A formula of imprecation. Thus and more may the L ORD do to me -b if anything but death parts me from you."
When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her;
and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, "Can this be Naomi?"

“Do not call me Naomi,” c I.e., “Pleasantness.” she replied. “Call me Mara, d I.e., “Bitterness.” for Shaddai e Usually rendered “the Almighty.” has made my lot very bitter.
I went away full, and the L ORD has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when the L ORD has f Others “testified against.” dealt harshly with -f me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!”
Thus Naomi returned from the country of Moab; she returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Chapter 2

Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband’s side, a man of substance, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.
Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “I would like to go to the fields and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone who may show me kindness.” “Yes, daughter, go,” she replied;
and off she went. She came and gleaned in a field, behind the reapers; and, as luck would have it, it was the piece of land belonging to Boaz, who was of Elimelech’s family.
Presently Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers, “The L ORD be with you!” And they responded, “The L ORD bless you!”
Boaz said to the servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose girl is that?”
The servant in charge of the reapers replied, “She is a Moabite girl who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.
She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.’ She has been on her feet ever since she came this morning. a Meaning of Heb. uncertain. She has rested but little in the hut.” -a
Boaz said to Ruth, b Lit. “Have you not heard, daughter?” “Listen to me, daughter. -b Don’t go to glean in another field. Don’t go elsewhere, but stay here close to my girls.
Keep your eyes on the field they are reaping, and follow them. I have ordered the men not to molest you. And when you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink some of [the water] that the men have drawn.”
She prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and said to him, “Why are you so kind as to single me out, when I am a foreigner?”
Boaz said in reply, “I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before.
May the L ORD reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the L ORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!”
She answered, “You are most kind, my lord, to comfort me and to speak gently to your maidservant—though I am not so much as one of your maidservants.”
At mealtime, Boaz said to her, “Come over here and partake of the meal, and dip your morsel in the vinegar.” So she sat down beside the reapers. He handed her roasted grain, and she ate her fill and had some left over.
When she got up again to glean, Boaz gave orders to his workers, “You are not only to let her glean among the sheaves, without interference,
but you must also pull some [stalks] out of the heaps and leave them for her to glean, and not scold her.”
She gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned—it was about an ephah of barley—
and carried it back with her to the town. When her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and when she also took out and gave her what she had left over after eating her fill,
her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be he who took such generous notice of you!” So she told

her mother-in-law whom she had worked with, saying, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.”
Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he of the L ORD, who has not failed in His kindness to the living or to the dead! For,” Naomi explained to her daughter-in-law, “the man is related to us; he is one of our redeeming kinsmen.” c Cf. Lev. 25.25 and note and Deut. 25.5–6. The fact that Boaz was a kinsman of Ruth’s dead husband opened up the possibility of providing an heir for the latter.
Ruth the Moabite said, “He even told me, ‘Stay close by my workers until all my harvest is finished.’”
And Naomi answered her daughter-in-law Ruth, “It is best, daughter, that you go out with his girls, and not be annoyed in some other field.”
So she stayed close to the maidservants of Boaz, and gleaned until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. Then she stayed at home with her mother-in-law.

Chapter 3

Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “Daughter, I must seek a home for you, where you may be happy.
Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you were close to. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor tonight.
So bathe, anoint yourself, dress up, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not disclose yourself to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.
When he lies down, note the place where he lies down, and go over and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what you are to do.”
She replied, “I will do everything you tell me.”
She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her.
Boaz ate and drank, and in a cheerful mood went to lie down beside the grainpile. Then she went over stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down.
In the middle of the night, the man gave a start and pulled back—there was a woman lying at his feet!
“Who are you?” he asked. And she replied, “I am your handmaid Ruth. a A formal act of espousal; cf. Ezek. 16.8. Spread your robe over your handmaid, -a for you are a redeeming kinsman.”
He exclaimed, “Be blessed of the L ORD, daughter! Your latest deed of loyalty is greater than the first, in that you have not turned to younger men, whether poor or rich. b I.e., she sought out a kinsman of her dead husband; see note at 2.20 above. Her first act of loyalty had been to return with Naomi.
And now, daughter, have no fear. I will do in your behalf whatever you ask, for all the c Lit. “gate of my people.” elders of my town -c know what a fine woman you are.
But while it is true I am a redeeming kinsman, there is another redeemer closer than I.
Stay for the night. Then in the morning, if he will act as a redeemer, good! let him redeem. But if he does not want to act as redeemer for you, I will do so myself, as the L ORD lives! Lie down until morning.”
So she lay at his feet until dawn. She rose before one person could distinguish another, for he thought, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”
And he said, “Hold out the shawl you are wearing.” She held it while he measured out six measures of barley, and he put it on her back. When she d So in many Heb. mss; most mss. read “he.” got back to the town,
she came to her mother-in-law, who asked, “How is it with you, daughter?”
She told her all that the man had done for her;

and she added, “He gave me these six measures of barley, saying to me, ‘Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”
And Naomi said, “Stay here, daughter, till you learn how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.”

Chapter 4

Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, “Come over and sit down here, So-and-so!” And he came over and sat down.
Then [Boaz] took ten elders of the town and said, “Be seated here”; and they sat down.
He said to the redeemer, “Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the piece of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech.
I thought I should disclose the matter to you and say: Acquire it in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you are willing to redeem it, redeem! But if you a So many Heb. mss., Septuagint, and Targum; most mss. read “he.” will not redeem, tell me, that I may know. For there is no one to redeem but you, and I come after you.” “I am willing to redeem it,” he replied.
Boaz continued, “When you acquire the property from Naomi b Emendation yields “you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the deceased”; cf. v. 10. and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire the wife of the deceased, -b so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate.”
The redeemer replied, “Then I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own estate. c I.e., by expending capital for property which will go to the son legally regarded as Mahlon’s; see Deut. 25.5–6. You take over my right of redemption, for I am unable to exercise it.”
Now this was formerly done in Israel in cases of redemption or exchange: to validate any transaction, one man would take off his sandal and hand it to the other. Such was the practice d Understanding Heb. te‘udah in the sense of the Arabic ‘aṭdah and Syriac ‘yaṭdaṭ. Cf. Ibn Ezra. in Israel.
So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Acquire for yourself,” he drew off his sandal.
And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, “You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon.
I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate, that the name of the deceased may not disappear from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today.”
All the people at the gate and the elders answered, “We are. May the L ORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the House of Israel! Prosper in Ephrathah e Ephrathah is another name applied to Bethlehem; cf. 1.2; Gen. 35.16, 19; 48.7; Mic. 5.1. and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem!
And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the offspring which the L ORD will give you by this young woman.”
So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. The L ORD let her conceive, and she bore a son.
And the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the L ORD, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel!
He will renew your life and sustain your old age; for he is born of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons.”
Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother,
and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, “A son is born to Naomi!” They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David.

This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron,
Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Amminadab,
Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon, f Heb. “Salmah.”
Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Obed,
Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.